News Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDMONTON 2007
CULTURAL CAPITALE CAPITAL CULTURELLE of CANADA de CANADA

City purchases land for future public parks use

Natural area to serve west end residents

Edmonton, January 7, 2008 – The City of Edmonton purchased 70 hectares (177 acres) of land located south of Wolf Willow Ravine and the Edmonton Golf and Country Club. The purchase secures public ownership of a 2.2 km riverfront property on the north side of the North Saskatchewan River for future public parks use. By comparison, Hawrelak Park is approximately 66 hectares. The closest existing major river valley park in the area is Terwillegar Park, located across the river to the south of this new unnamed park.

"This acquisition is a significant accomplishment in a 100-year history of protecting the river valley for public parks use, as first proposed by Fredrick Todd, Landscape Architect in 1907. The timing also coincides very well with the future construction of the Fort Edmonton Footbridge anticipated to commence in 2008, and the concept planning underway for Terwillegar Park," stated Rob Marchak, director of parks planning.

This land provides an important trail connection and neighbourhood access as outlined in both the *Ribbon of Green Concept Plan* and the River Valley Alliance *Capital Region River Valley Plan of Action*. It will provide the only river valley park serving west end residents between the Quesnell and Anthony Henday bridges.

"We now have an important link to other river valley parks within our valued parks and open spaces system. The future Fort Edmonton footbridge lands here and plans to extend trails north and south will follow. We can also protect and manage this land as a critical wildlife corridor within the river valley parks system," explained Gabriele Barry, senior parks planner.

The acquisition of this land supports the historical and current vision of our river valley; protecting this incredible park system for future generations of Edmontonians. This river terrace area is comprised of old growth forest and open meadow and is a high priority ecological corridor as identified by the City's Office of Natural Areas. It also supports EcoVision Edmonton, Council's vision for an environmentally sustainable city.

- 30 -

2008-03027/

About Edmonton:

Vibrant and culturally diverse, Edmonton is an ideal place to live, learn, work, invest and visit. Home to more than one million people and the global port to more than $100 billion in northern oil sands development, Alberta's capital is an economic powerhouse offering the nation's best combination of business opportunity and quality of life. Edmonton leads the world in healthcare research and innovation, education, and environmental stewardship. As Canada's Festival City and the Cultural Capital for 2007, Edmonton is alive with endless festivals, events, attractions, art and activities.

For more information on Edmonton, please visit our website at: www.edmonton.ca.

For additional information, contact:

Rob Marchak
Director of Parks Planning
Asset Management and Public Works
780-496-5848

THE CITY OF Edmonton